

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2800

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 21742

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJ: FUNDING OF UNHCR PROGRAM IN THAILAND

1. IN THE COURSE OF MY TALK WITH FONMIN CHATCHAI OCTOBER 14, HE STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED DURING HIS STAY IN JAPAN THAT THE GOJ WOULD MAKE A CONTRIBUTION OF APPROXIMATELY \$1 MILLION TO UNHCR. HE POINTED OUT THAT TO DATE THE INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNHCR FELL FAR SHORT OF THE \$12.4 MILLION GOAL.

2. I TOLD CHATCHAI THAT THE USG HAD APPROVED A \$3.1 MILLION CONTRIBUTION AND THAT A FAR MORE SIZABLE CONTRIBUTION WAS BEING APPROVED IN WASHINGTON. IT WAS MY HOPE THAT ONCE THE MAGNITUDE OF THE U.S. CONTRIBUTION WAS MADE PUBLIC, THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO SEEK CONTRIBUTIONS TO TOP OFF THE REQUIRED SUM.

3. I RECALL THAT PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION FOR APPROXIMATELY \$6 MILLION WAS APPROVED DURING THE PERIOD OF MY CONSULTATION BUT THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NO OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION NOR ARE THE THAI AWARE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF OUR CONTRIBUTION. IT APPEARS TO US THAT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF ASSISTING
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THE UNHCR TO REACH ITS FUND RAISING GOALS BUT ALSO AS

A MEANS OF PRESSURING THE RTG TO PROVIDE MORE SUPPORT AND TO ASSURE THE MOVEMENT OF SUPPLIES TO REFUGEES IF THE SCOPE OF THE US CONTRIBUTION WERE MADE PUBLIC SOONEST.

4. MISSION HERE CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED OVER LACK OF SUPPORT BEING GIVEN REFUGEES IN ALL THAI CAMPS. NEED FOR FOOD, SHELTER AND MEDICINE IS ACUTE. IN ADDITION, CONSUL HARBIN REPORTS THAT WITH ONSET OF COLD SEASON, REFUGEES IN NORTHERN CAMPS WILL NEED BLANKETS. HIS REPORT ON VISIT TO NAN AREA FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING STATUS OF OUR EARLIER CONTRIBUTION OF \$3.1 MILLION. UNHCR REPS HERE INFORM US THAT SUMS AVAILABLE TO THEM ARE LIMITED TO THE \$500,000 COMMITTED TO THE PROGRAM IN AUGUST AND THAT NO REPEAT NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED. NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDER WAY BETWEEN UNHCR REPS AND RTG FOR DISBURSEMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL \$1 MILLION, BUT WE BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE INITIATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF PROGRAM WILL NOT GET UNDER WAY UNTIL BOTH THE THAI AND UNHCR ARE CLEAR ON THE FUNDS AVAILABLE AND CAN PROCEED WITH A COHERENT PLAN. FROM HERE IT WOULD APPEAR THAT UNHCR IS DISBURSING FUNDS WITH AN EYEDROPPER AND THAT THE THAI ARE DRAGGING THEIR FEET OWING TO THEIR UNCERTAINTY IN REGARD TO INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES WHICH ARE LIKELY TO BECOME AVAILABLE TO THEM. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE BEST WAY TO BREAK OUT OF THIS CIRCLE WOULD BE FOR THE USG TO MAKE PUBLIC THE SIZE OF ITS CONTRIBUTION AND FOR THE UNHCR TO PROCEED WITH TIMELY DISBURSEMENTS HERE.

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